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DEVELOPMENT

up world, and fears (in unconscious phantasy) that they will revenge themselves on him for his own hostilities to them. He tries to quell the anxiety aroused by his helplessness by weaving those phantasies of omnipotence, often hinted at in his play, of being "on top of", "higher than" his parents and in control of them, as well as by trying to part them and win one of them over to his side against the other. But once (and in so far as) he has overcome his first dread of other children as rivals, and discovered the delights of *togetherness* with them, he finds that they can feel and act with him against the grown-ups too, no less than against other rival groups of children. The fellow-members' of his group not only support him against other children outside his group—they give him courage and power to face adults. He and they can join forces, to defy the dreaded parent openly ("We shan't come to tea with you any more"—"horrid Mrs. I."—"We shan't say 'Good morning/' and so on); or to plot and scheme against them in private ("Let's put a worm down her back to bite her").

Now in a well-ordered environment and apart from specially difficult children, incidents of open and concerted defiance against the adults in charge on the part of *little* children are on the whole rare and transitory. Playful defiance will naturally be more frequent than real aggression. But open shows of hostility to the grown-ups, whether serious or playful, are but indications of an adjustment that is going on in the deeper levels of the child's mind, and that reveals itself also in many other and more commonly approved way~. The greater freedom of spirit, the greater openness and confidence of disposition shown individually as well as co-operatively by children who play freely among

their fellows,
as compared with solitary children, rests upon
the greater
security which this discovery of other children as
allies makes
possible. The benefits which the nursery school
(or large
family) confers upon its children are bound up
with the ease
and relief from unconscious (as well as conscious)
fear of the
parents which the companionship of other
children brings
to each.

Here, then, we touch upon a phase of his
emotional growth
which is of the utmost importance to all the
future social
history of the child. The banding together
shown in these
incidents of actual hostility is itself a
fundamental step